

celebration, one student was left dead and another has been charged with involuntary manslaughter, a felony punishable by up to 15 years in prison. Such an event is extremely difficult to comprehend. For the people and families directly involved, it is nearly impossible.

Shortly after the tragedy at Kettering University, following a heavy night of drinking, an undergraduate student at Yale University decided it would be a good idea to fire one of his pistols in the basement of his fraternity house. When he heard the shots, a visitor to the school ran downstairs to investigate. The student responded to the visitor's requests for him to put the gun down by firing two rounds of blanks at the ceiling. When the visitor then tried to convince the student even blanks could be dangerous, he is reported to have responded by asking "Why don't I point it at your head and find out?" When the student was subsequently arrested, police discovered an AK-47 assault rifle, AR-15 assault rifle, two rifles, a shotgun, several other pistols and nearly 5,000 rounds of ammunition in his bedroom. He has been charged with two counts of illegal possession of an assault rifle, unlawful discharge of a firearm, reckless endangerment in the first degree, threatening in the second degree, and breach of peace in the second degree.

Time after time, we see these tragedies reported in the news. Yet Congress has not taken the necessary steps to help control these acts of violence or ease the anxiety that many parents and families feel each day as their children head off to school. By removing firearms from potentially dangerous situations, we can prevent these types of tragedies from occurring. Congress should take up and pass sensible gun legislation as soon as possible.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. REED. Madam President, due to the delay of my flight, I was unavoidably absent for vote No. 285, the vote to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 976.

Had I been present, I would have voted yes on the motion to proceed. This is one of the most important pieces of legislation that the Senate will consider this year. It is the first reauthorization of the highly successful Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP. I am proud to have been a part of the original bipartisan effort to create this initiative back in 1997. While some on the other side of the aisle will criticize the Finance Committee agreement pending before this Chamber, no one can deny CHIP has played a crucial role in helping to reduce the rate of uninsured low-income children over the past 10 years.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the number of uninsured children fell from 22.5 percent in 1996 to 16.9 percent in 2005 due in large part to CHIP.

I look forward to a vigorous and spirited debate on this bill, and I am dedicated to working very closely with my colleagues to ensure the Senate will advance a reauthorization bill that reaffirms our commitment to health insurance coverage for children in Rhode Island and around the country. •

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COMMEMORATING THE 1997 SPRING CREEK FLOOD

• Mr. ALLARD. Madam President, today I commemorate the Spring Creek Flood in Fort Collins, CO, which occurred 10 years ago this weekend. As the rains began to fall on the evening of July 27, 1997, it would have been hard for anyone to believe that this seemingly typical summer afternoon storm would wreak havoc on the city.

All told, 14.5 inches fell on Fort Collins within a 31-hour period of time. Composite rainfall patterns indicated that over 10 inches of rain blanketed a 30 square mile area of northern Colorado. This flood took the lives of 5 Fort Collins residents and forced over 400 to be rescued from the rising waters, severely damaged or destroyed approximately 2,000 homes and businesses across the city, caused over \$200 million in damage, including the near destruction of Colorado State University's library. The storm derailed a train and caused buildings to explode. This was not something this college town was used to experiencing. Those residents who were fortunate enough to be unaffected by the flood that night awoke to the sounds of helicopters, massive road closures, and local schools converted into Red Cross shelters. For a place that occasionally made national news by appearing on lists for "best place to live" and "most restaurants per capita," this sudden and shocking destruction was not the reason why the people of Fort Collins ever imagined their town would be the top story on all the news networks.

As quickly as the rains came that night, and continued through most of the following day, it was all over. Sadly, like the pictures we all vividly remember of recent natural disasters in the United States, many wondered aloud in Fort Collins 10 years ago how this could have happened here. As the small creeks that flowed peacefully along the sides of bike trails and through the parks and baseball fields of the city suddenly swelled and transformed into violent streams of water that engulfed so much, it seemed probable that this city of about 110,000 residents would be permanently affected by this storm for a long time to come. For a community that had experienced tremendous expansion and job growth

through the 1990s—due considerably to the rise of the tech boom—it appeared the good times had come to an end. With so many infrastructures in disrepair, it seemed unlikely that companies would continue to expand to Fort Collins in the manner they had been doing over the years preceding the flood.

What had long been, and continues to be, the heart of Fort Collins, Colorado State University, received the brunt of the damage. Just 5 weeks prior to the start of classes, a 7-foot wall of water that had concentrated its strength through the run off of many smaller floods tore through the main campus. Thirty-six buildings sustained significant damage, most especially the newly remodeled Morgan Library and the Lory Student Center. Rain-water, sewage and debris rushed through the library and destroyed about 425,000 books and journals, about one-quarter of the library's inventory. As school began that year, the students and professors adapted to a more nomadic life, but worked together, as they all faced the same obstacles.

As time moved on, CSU began to recover from the flood, the Morgan Library was rebuilt and CSU took the opportunity to update its electronic resources, making them state-of-the-art. The drainage systems were updated and replaced, with walls and landscaping put in place to counter a flood 6 inches greater than what was experienced in 1997. As CSU recovered, the city did as well. Beautification and clean-up efforts took place on a massive scale, stronger bridges were built, and creeks were redesigned to more evenly disperse water should this 500-year flood ever occur again. The community at-large pitched in to clean up the parks and neighborhoods that were littered by debris. Local businesses, the school district, and CSU all continued to work together and leaned on each other to bring Fort Collins back.

As the Colorado summer faded into fall and the days began getting shorter, the mounds of ruined furniture and rows of unusable refrigerators that lined the neighborhood sidewalks for so long slowly began disappearing from the city's landscape and life started to get back to normal. Fort Collins has continued to grow over the last 10 years and so has CSU. Still, there are many reminders today of the storm: from the occasional open spaces that were simply wiped out by the flood and never rebuilt; to new buildings, roads and bridges that were built following the storm; to the glaring markers that line the Spring Creek Trail showing the water levels on that day 10 years ago.

Sadly, Fort Collins' experience with flooding and tragedy is shared by many communities across the Nation, most especially along the gulf coast in Louisiana and Mississippi, as many continue to struggle to find some semblance of normalcy almost 2 years after Katrina and Rita. Recently, we have